

Message Text

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S E C R E T VIENNA 1656

FROM US REP MBFR

E. O. 11652: NGDS

TAGS: PARM, NATO

SUBJECT: MBFR: FORTHCOMING WORK IN NATO

REF: USNATO 0865

1. BEGIN SUMMARY: THE DELEGATION SHARES USNATO'S ASSESSMENT OF THE POTENTIAL LONG-RANGE IMPORTANCE FOR THE CONTINUED STRENGTH OF THE NATO ALLIANCE OF THE SHARED EXPERIENCE OF WORKING ON COMMON FORMULATION OF ALLIANCE POLICY FOR THE MBFR NEGOTIATIONS. IN GENERAL WE WOULD TEND TO TAKE AN APPROACH TO THE QUESTION OF WHAT ISSUES NATO SHOULD STUDY AND DECIDE ON IN ADVANCE WHICH IS PRAGMATIC AND WHICH PRESERVES AS MUCH FLEXIBILITY AND FREEDOM OF DECISION AS POSSIBLE FOR THE USG. END SUMMARY.

2. WHERE APPROPRIATE AND PRACTICAL, DELEGATION WOULD SUPPORT

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A PROCEDURE WHEREBY THE AD HOC GROUP, WITHIN GUIDANCE FROM

CAPITALS, WORKS OUT A RECOMMENDED SOLUTION OF AN ACUTAL AND SPECIFIC NEGOTIATING ISSUE WHICH HAS IN FACT ARISEN IN THE COURSE OF THE MBFR TALKS AND THEN SUBMITS IT FOR THE COUNCIL'S CONSIDERATION. THIS APPROACH SEEMS PREFERABLE TO ADOPTING AS A STANDARD RULE THE IDEA THAT BRUSSELS SHOULD AS A MATTER OF COURSE DECIDE ON EACH NEGOTIATING ISSUE IN ADVANCE. WHEN ISSUES ARE DEALT WITH IN A MORE ABSTRACT WAY, AGREEMENT AMONG DIVERGING VIEWS OF NATO MEMBERS IS OFTEN DIFFICULT TO ACHIEVE AND AS A CONSEQUENCE, THE RESULTING COMPROMISE TENDS TO TAKE ON A RIGID CHARACTER. MOREOVER, IN MAY CASES, SUCH PRIOR DECISIONS WOULD HAVE BEEN TAKEN AT A POINT IN TIME BEFORE THE ALLIES COULD VISUALIZE THE CONTEXT IN WHICH THE GIVEN ISSUE HAS ARISEN AND BEFORE EASTERN VIEWPOINTS ON THE ISSUE AT HAND HAD BECOME FULLY KNOWN.

3. THE RESULT CAN BE CONSIDERABLE INTRA-ALLIANCE FRICTION, BOTH IN REACHING AN AGREED POSITION AND ALSO WHEN THE AGREED POSITIONS ARE APPLIED IN REAL NEGOTIATING SITUATIONS. ONE HARD-FOUGHT EXAMPLE IS THE CASE OF THE ALLIANCE DECISION TO INCLUDE HUNGARY AMONG DIRECT MBFR PARTICIPANTS AND ITS AFTERMATH. IN ANOTHER CASE, ALTHOUGH LAUNCHED BEFORE THE MBFR NEGOTIATIONS WERE REALLY STARTED AND THEREFORE UNDER EXCEPTIONAL CIRCUMSTANCES, THE NATO STUDIES OF BOTH STABILIZING MEASURES AND OF VERIFICATION HAVE ENTAILED NAC DECISIONS ON A DEGREE OF DETAIL WHICH HAS GONE FAR BEYOND SETTING GENERAL POLICY AND WHOSE EXTENT AND DEGREE MAY YET CAUSE CONSIDERABLE FURTHER INTRA-ALLIANCE DIFFICULTIES ONCE THESE MEASURES ARE ACTUALLY NEGOTIATED WITH THE EAST, AND IT EMERGES THAT ADJUSTMENTS IN THE AGREED DETAILED POSITIONS ACHIEVED WITH SUCH DIFFICULTY MAY BE REQUIRED IN ORDER TO GAIN EASTERN AGREEMENT TO THE OVERALL SUBSTANCE OF THE MEASURES CONCERNED.

4. CLEARLY, IT IS DESIRABLE FOR THE ALLIES TO STUDY AND TO AGREE IN ADVANCE THEIR POLICY ON SOME ISSUES CONNECTED WITH THE MBFR NEGOTIATIONS. WE WOULD THEREFORE BELIEVE IT PREFERABLE NOT TO MAKE IT A RULE EITHER THAT ALL ISSUES SHOULD BE SETTLED IN BRUSSELS IN ADVANCE OR THAT NONE SHOULD BE, BUT RATHER TO DECIDE IN EACH CASE, WHAT THE MOST EFFECTIVE WAY OF REACHING AN AGREED ALLIED DECISION MAY BE. WE WOULD RECOMMEND THAT WHERE NAC HAS DECIDED ON STUDYING A GIVEN TOPIC, EVERY SUCH STUDY

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SHOULD AS A MATTER OF COURSE CONTAIN A DESCRIPTION PREPARED BY THE AD HOC GROUP OF THE EASTERN POSITION ON THE ISSUE INVOLVED TO THE EXTENT THAT THE EASTERN POSITIONS HAD THUS FAR EMERGED. THE EXISTENCE OF SUCH A SECTION WOULD SERVE AS A REMINDER THAT THE STUDY INVOLVED AN ACTIVE NEGOTIATING ISSUE RATHER THAN A SITUATION IN WHICH ALLIED VIEWS WOULD FIND READY ACCEPTANCE.

5. IT WOULD APPEAR DESIRABLE IN GENERAL THAT ALLIANCE STUDIES

SHOULD FOCUS ON INDIVIDUAL, SEPARATE POLICY ISSUES. IN OUR VIEW, ADVANCE ALLIANCE DECISIONS OF A LARGE-SCALE NATURE COVERING THE INTER-RELATIONSHIP OF SEVERAL ASPECTS OF THE MBFR NEGOTIATIONS SHOULD BE AVOIDED. PROJECTS OF THE LATTER KIND REPRESENT THE TYPE OF ADVANCE DECISION WHICH SEEMS MOST LIKELY TO FREEZE THE ENTIRE ALLIANCE POSITION. THE LAST ITEM ON THE LIST SUGGESTED BY USNATO IN THE REFTTEL, BASIC PROVISIONS OF A DRAFT TEXT OF AN MBFR AGREEMENT, WOULD APPEAR TO BE OF SUCH A NATURE. THE NAC SHOULD OF COURSE REVIEW DRAFT LANGUAGE WHICH MAY IN DUE COURSE BE WORKED OUT IN VIENNA IN SEGMENTS WITH GUIDANCE FROM CAPITALS AND WITHIN GENERAL GUIDANCE FROM NAC AND, IF IT WISHED AMEND SUCH DRAFTS, WHICH OF COURSE WOULD BE AD REFERENDUM IN ANY CASE. BUT WE WOULD ADVISE AGAINST SEEKING ALLIANCE AGREEMENT TO AN OVERALL AGREED TEXT OF WHAT AT BEST WOULD IN THE FORM FIRST TABLES HAVE TO BE A NEGOTIATING DOCUMENT SUBJECT TO CHANGE. THE COST IN NATO RESOURCES IN ACHIEVING AGREEMENT ON SUCH A DOCUMENT WOULD BE GREAT. IN THE CIRCUMSTANCES, THE COUNCIL WOULD QUITE NATURALLY REQUIRE ITS AGREEMENT BEFORE ANY CHANGE, NO MATTER HOW MINOR, COULD BE MADE. THIS WOULD BIVE THOSE ALLIES WHO ARE COOL TO THE MBFR PROJECT OR WHO HAVE SPECIAL INTERESTS A VETO RIGHT AT EACH POINT. HUMES

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